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Life and the Technological: Cyborgs, Companions and the Chthulucene

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Abstract:

Haraway’s cyborg is a widely travelled figure with an important relation to life writing. This article traces the cyborg through modes of life writing, and routes through feminist science fiction and science studies. It examines attachments and anger, looking at the return of the alienated cyborg in recent accounts of Haraway’s work.

Key words:

cyborg; life writing; cyborg embryo; feminist science studies

Life and the Technological: Cyborgs, Companions and the Chthulucene

One of Haraway's most charismatic and widely travelled figures is that of the cyborg. It emerges as a figure in her writing in the 1980s and 1990s and enables important interventions in thinking about life and technology. The cyborg is a figure for thinking about lives as always, already technological and prosthetic. One of its gifts is that it offers a different way into this than either technological evolutionism or the post-humanism of actor network theory. The cyborg is a figure of specificity, of fiction but also of real life couplings of technology and flesh which are neither evolutionary determined nor neutral, but in Haraway's terms, non-innocent encounters. The non-innocent relationality of the cyborg is posited as one of responsibility, which, in Haraway's lexicon, evokes both an ability to respond to others and an ethics of encounter. The cyborg is a singular figure, although in her work singularity is always multiple, and allows for thinking about the life of life story and technology (e.g. Henwood, Kennedy and Miller).

The figure has generated strong attachments, multiple stories, and anger over the last thirty years. This article traces a partial examination of the manifesto as life writing, debates about, and practices of cyborg life writing, including autobiography and fiction. It examines the possibilities of the cyborg including, anger, rejection and reconfiguration (as embryo and doppelganger) as well as its relation to life itself more broadly conceived.

A Manifesto for Cyborgs as life writing: Inhabiting the cyborg.

Haraway and Cary Wolfe describe the style of the cyborg manifesto as less personal and autobiographical when contrasted with her later piece, *The Companion Species Manifesto*. However, the cyborg manifesto itself is a form of life writing and Haraway and others deploy the cyborg to configure life stories. For example, Haraway writes of inhabiting the figure of the cyborg. Early in the manifesto she uses the plural first person *we* to gather a collective identification with the cyborg: 'The cyborg is a matter of fiction and lived experience (...) in short, we are cyborgs' (Haraway, 1987: 1). She concludes the manifesto in first person voice: 'I would rather be a cyborg'. In a much later interview Haraway recalls that she 'tried to inhabit cyborgs critically' and also writes of leaving the figure behind (Haraway and Wolfe, 96). Thus, the cyborg is a singular figure separate from the writer and conjured as a figure through the text, but written into a subjective identity both as a singular I and collective we. This signals the way in which the singular is multiple for Haraway and this reaches to an enduring claim in her work which is that singular identity is always relational in a web or dance of life and being. She evokes the integrated circuit and the Spiral Dance as ways of articulating the doing of being as relational. In the manifesto she stresses relationality throughout. In the forty-two pages of the manifesto, there are thirty-five references to the word relation, usually preceded by 'social' as in social relations, including the 'social relations of science and technology' but also relations of domination, wage, sexuality, reproduction, gender and machine body relations.

In writing the manifesto Haraway animates the figure of the cyborg, gives it life such that it can figure in her writing. The manifesto also gives of Haraway's life, the life of her voice, imagination, politics and disposition but also tracing of her life, and situatedness. There are seventy-seven instances of the use of first person terms such as: I, us, our, we; or direct

references to Haraway's thinking, influences and collaborations in the writing. This includes accounts of her working through ideas at panels, events, discussions, with students, colleagues and through reading. There is also a direct autobiographical voice when she situates herself within the text:

"I am conscious of the odd perspective provided by my historical position — a Ph.D. in biology for an Irish Catholic girl was made possible by Sputnik's impact on U.S. national science-education policy. I have a body and mind as much constructed by the post-World War II arms race and cold war as by the women's movements." (1987: 27-28)

The text constantly reiterates her writing voice through the use of 'I think', 'I am', 'I know' and 'I would'. This I also most famously appears in the final line: 'Though both are bound in the spiral dance, I would rather be a cyborg than a goddess.' (1987: 37).

Haraway refers to the cyborg as a writing technology. 'Cyborg writing' appears twice in the text but this injunction is the one that has travelled in the proliferation of her figure as it traverses other texts: 'Feminist cyborg stories have the task of recoding communication and intelligence to subvert command and control.' (1987: 30). The word writing appears thirty times in the text and operates as a focal operation, at the same time the word life appears twenty two times in the text. She links life and writing through the cyborg, as a life writing technology most explicitly in this statement: 'The cyborg is a matter of fiction and lived experience that changes what counts as women's experience in the late twentieth century. This is a struggle over life and death, but the boundary between science fiction and social reality is an optical illusion.' (1987: 2) The manifesto is situated across life writing genres, on one level declaiming and calling for a politics, at others conjuring a figure of ambivalent realism, and at others storying Haraway's position. It draws on autobiography, fiction and political theory, negotiating all three genres.

Haraway demotes the cyborg, letting it stand aside because it no longer does the same kind of work in later writing and especially in relation to species and companion. It is important to think of the adjacency of the figure however. It is not written out, or over, but stands aside, or adjacent to the other figures that Haraway works on. It has the sense then of remaining part of what she refers to as, 'a menagerie of figurations' (Goodeve and Haraway; 135). Haraway develops this menagerie over time, in the figurative sense of the word as a diverse or strange collection, to think about how to inhabit and account for singularity and multiplicity in a web of relations. Even in its emergence in early writing the cyborg was already prefigured and prefiguring other relations, including human-machine but also human, machine and non-human-animal through connections with primatology as well as cybernetics. Her work on these figures over time relates to different senses of situatedness and political urgency at different moments. Writing in the 1980s in the midst of fracturing political movements Haraway offers the cyborg in relation to this question: 'Which identities are available to ground such a potent political myth called 'us', and what could motivate enlistment in this collectivity?' (1987: 9)

The cyborg manifesto then is a form of life writing in that it gives life to the figure of the cyborg, situates elements of Haraway's autobiography and enlists a first person voice. It also gives life to the possibility of political affinity and collective political subjectivities. It is important to register that it is written against both the technopolitics of the 1980s and a perception that there was a feminist rejection of technologies in some versions of eco-feminism and feminist essentialism. In the final performative desire of the manifesto Haraway now famously writes: 'though both are bound in the Spiral Dance I'd rather be a

cyborg than a goddess.’ I’ve flagged this statement repeatedly because it is important to think about the choreography that Haraway is trying to get at. Again, adjacency is important here, the cyborg and goddess are both bound in the doing of life. One does not undo the other, but even as multiple, a life is lived in relation to specific positions, although these can be contradictory and change. Positions have moments of pertinence, and the cyborg is such a moment. In later writing Haraway writes that her demotion of the cyborg risks alienating her old doppelganger (2003). This move also of course risks alienating those gathered up through this figuration. In a later section I return to the figure of the doppelganger, and examine some of the anger and attachment to both the compelling power of the cyborg and to Haraway’s letting it stand aside.

Cyborgs and life writing as a field

Haraway’s contribution goes beyond the history of ideas about technology and offers an interventional life project. The cyborg is a life writing technology, which, in its first instantiation, enables a specific account of the context in which Star Wars, Sputnik, chip making and the transition of computers between people and machines are significant. The intervention that Haraway made historically in relation to science and technology studies has new purchase in relation to resurgent God tricks in materialist and (post)phenomenological approaches which have currency right now (e.g. Stiegler; Morton). The figure of the cyborg then and Haraway’s sense of life as non-human-human entanglement remain potent interventions in the current moment. However, although Haraway is one of the most cited scholars in the humanities and the cyborg has travelled through many fields, autobiography and life writing scholarship remains curiously ambivalent and amnesiac about its politics.

There are many instances in which the following injunction: ‘Feminist cyborg stories have the task of recoding communication and intelligence to subvert command and control’ (1987: 30) can be examined with a closer lens. In many of these the use of the cyborg as a life writing technology comes into focus. Broad indicative examples include Anne Balsamo’s work in *Technologies of the Gendered Body; First Cyberfeminist International* (Solfrank and OBN); *The Gendered Cyborg: A Reader* (Kirkup et al.); *Cybersexualities: A Reader on Feminist Theory, Cyborgs and Cyberspace* (Wolmark); *How We Became Posthuman: Virtual Bodies in Cybernetics, Literature, and Informatics* (Hayles); *Reload: Rethinking Woman and Cyberculture* (Flanagan and Booth); *The Cyborg Experiments: the extensions of the Body in the Media Age* (Zylinksa) Moreover, two publications that specifically speak to the field of life writing are Nod Miller, Flis Henwood and Helen Kennedy’s edited collection, *Cyborg Lives? Women’s Technobiographies* and Sidonie Smith’s article: ‘The autobiographical manifesto: Identities, temporalities, politics’.

Of these two publications, Smith’s was much closer to the cyborg manifesto in terms of publication date (1991), with Miller et al publishing a decade on from this (2001). Smith is also a much more central figure to the field of life writing than the editors of *Cyborg Lives*. Smith examines three manifestos as autobiography. Hélène Cixous’s ‘The Laugh of the Medusa’, Gloria Anzaldúa ‘Borderlands/La Frontera’ and Donna Haraway’s ‘A Manifesto for Cyborgs’. Smith analyses these texts as forms of feminist autobiography and argues that they offer possible revolutionary subjectivities. In bringing these forms of writing into the field of autobiography Smith does important work in opening up the political possibility of this kind of writing. While her analysis is largely concerned with the political work of re-writing subjectivity she also identifies the collective we of the manifesto as problematic. She indicates that the address to a counter public is also a kind of universalization, albeit more

narrow and partial than 'the hegemonic center's universalization' (Smith; 209). However, she singles out Haraway's manifesto and its suggestion of an affinity politics as offering a break with 'rigid communitarian identity politics' (Smith; 209). Thus, for Smith, Haraway's form of autobiographic manifesto becomes a potent political challenge to both the specificity of the singular I of biography and autobiography, and to the universal human subject.

It is interesting to note that despite Smith's intervention, the figure of the cyborg and Haraway's work more generally is not taken up more in the field of life writing. In a 2012 special issue of *Biography* on posthumanism, Gillian Whitlock notes that the field of life writing has not really engaged with the posthuman. In the collection Haraway's work is taken up, but only in relation to her work on animal-non-human animal relations. Although Smith contributes to this collection, her article 'Reading the posthuman backwards' doesn't cite either Haraway or her own earlier article about the manifesto. Instead she reads the posthuman as figured by the cyborg through a number of other writers including N Katherine Hayles and William Mitchell. In the introduction to the special issue, and through the articles curated, Haraway's cyborg is absent both through Smith's citation practices and Whitlock's critique of the field.

The article in that special collection which most clearly engages with Haraway's work is Cynthia Huff and Joel Haefner's 'His Master's Voice: Animalographies, Life Writing, and the Posthuman'. Whitlock observes that despite life writing not engaging with the posthuman, the post human is speaking through it now:

'Yet the twenty-first century would seem to be a moment when the posthuman is speaking, and is speaking through life writing, defined in its broadest sense. (155)

Huff and Haefner give an expansive definition of life writing as writing which takes a life as its subject. At the same time, they seem to mark the limits of posthuman life writing by taking non-human animal life as its subject. Life writing as it perceives itself as a field then, seems to have had little truck with Haraway's figure of the cyborg, and in this account of its engagement with the posthuman writes out its own history, reflecting an ambivalence in the field. The collection also indicates that Haraway's work on companion species provides an identification towards which the field can gravitate and Haraway is cited more often in the field without the cyborg.

Another way into thinking about life writing and the figure of the cyborg is to look at Miller, Henwood and Kennedy's *Cyborg Lives*. Helen Kennedy proposed technobiography to the journal *Biography* as a method in 2003 and both Margaretta Jolly and Wendy Harcourt who are active in this field have engaged in kinds of cyborg writing (Jolly; Harcourt). As the inclusion of the word in title of the book indicates, *Cyborg Lives* is an explicit attempt to create and examine 'women's technobiographies'. In the collection autobiography is used as a method to interrogate science and technology studies, and it has had purchase in this latter field. Each contribution takes the life of the author, or others, moving across moments of biography and autobiography, working with the figure of the cyborg in terms of inhabiting the figure as well as contesting it. Discomfort with its associations as well as an exploration of its possibility is evident in the collection and in Nod Miller's conclusion she turns back towards the figure of the goddess in direct conversation with Haraway's turning away. The collection helps to illuminate the contradictions and difficulties of cyborg writing as well as its capacity for strong attachments. Some of the stories highlight the difficulty of meeting Haraway's injunction to do the work of 'subverting command and control'.

Flis Henwood's contribution brings to the fore the powerful mechanisms of technoscientific control in relating her struggle with the medicalization of her pregnancy. Her story of her own expertise about the age of her fetus is precise, clearly linked to the moment of self-insemination. However, heteronormative assumptions in biomedicine about pregnancies obtained outside of the IVF industry were used to attempt to pressure her into an invasive amniocentesis test. Medical expertise defined the age of the fetus, based on the information from a scan and was considered more authoritative than her own experience of queer kinship practices. In this instance, the age derived from the scan was inaccurate and located the fetus in a much higher risk category for Down's syndrome than was the case based on Henwood's measurement. The cyborg figures here as the writer inhabited a subjective identity in which, she, the fetus, a scan, insemination and multiple social relations of science and technology coalesced. The figure of the cyborg is powerful in thinking about reproduction, IVF and women's experience in the UK in the 1980s. It also prefigured later developments in IVF including its emergence as a global industry in the 80s and 90s, and the introduction of practices in human cloning in the early 21st century.

Cyborg embryos and reproduction: writing a technological life itself.....

On the 21st anniversary of the Cyborg Manifesto, Sarah Franklin wrote of the 'Cyborg Embryo'. Her intervention links *Cyborg Lives*, and particularly Henwood's contribution, the figure of the cyborg and 'life itself'. In this intervention, Franklin explores the cyborg embryo through what she describes as Haraway's unique grammar of the biological:

'Thirty years later Haraway's analysis speaks cogently to the embryo strewn world of the 21st century. The anxious attention so often directed at 'the' embryo, as in the perennial debate over 'the moral status of the human embryo', forgets that human embryos are now a vast and diverse population, imaged, imagined and archived in media as diverse as liquid nitrogen, DVDs, virtual libraries, t-shirts, logos and brand names.' (168).

Franklin reconfigures the cyborg embryo to tell the story of how medicalized reproduction, and IVF became the interface for stem cells, cloning and transbiology. The figure of the cyborg embryo is useful in thinking about how the cyborg is a means of writing about both a life, and about life itself. This latter formulation is one that Franklin develops, drawing on Canguilhem, Foucault, Duden and Haraway. Life writing techniques have been applied to fetuses and embryos to make them the subject of a life. This giving voice to the fetus and embryo as a life story has been used predominantly in two different ways. Firstly, to promote anti-abortion campaigns by giving a life story to the embryo as a life distinct from the life of the mother and secondly to discipline pregnant women into specific modes of conduct viewed as best preserving that life (McNeil; Spallone).

Franklin deploys cyborg writing to illustrate the way life itself is storied and embryos are technoscientific. Through reframing the embryo she provides an intervention in relation to disciplinary embryo biographies. Reframing the cyborg embryo recodes the embryo as life enmeshed in technological systems, as technobiographical, acknowledging that life itself is a matter of nature-cultures. This challenges the use of the purified representation of the embryo to promote a life, which can be used against the other lives such an entity is entangled with. It reframes the embryo, and the role of IVF to locate them as generative of biomedical reproduction but equally of stem cells and cloning. The Cyborg Embryo goes beyond taking a life as its subject and extends what it might mean to write about life itself.

The cyborg live: attachments and anger

The cyborg manifesto has helped to open up writing about technological life itself as well as technobiographies of lives. The far reaching take up of cyborg writing evidences in part some of the strong attachments and affinities the cyborg manifesto generated. I wish to consider two further instances of life writing, both of which push the bounds of what life writing means. The first is the traversal of the figure of the cyborg across speculative fictions and the second is about anger and repudiation, as well as affinity.

Haraway figures the cyborg as a matter of fiction: 'a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction' (1987: 1). Her figuration of this creature drew it away from its instantiation in military, command control imaginaries 'modern war is a cyborg orgy' (1987: 2) and towards a challenge to its own genesis. In the Cyborg Manifesto this move is articulated as a kind of ironic blasphemy. The cyborg makes many traverses but one that I want to pick out is that across Marge Piercy's *He She It* or *Body of Glass*. Piercy's speculative novel unfolds in relation to an expanded definition of life writing: to take a life as its subject, and Haraway's injunction to recode.

Piercy notes in the novel that she was influenced by Haraway's figure and had read the Cyborg Manifesto. Within the story world of the novel many of the characters live cyborg lives, clearly enmeshed in systems of control, modification and prosthetics. Two central figures are portrayed as cyborgs in different and intensified ways: Yod and Nili. Yod is a cyborgian creation, closer to a robot or automata but with significant biological components, and is a self-learning AI. His relationship with the more clearly human character Shira, who is one of the subjects of life story in the novel, is one way in which the possibility of cyborg lives and cyborg subjectivity is explored. Shira is positioned as more human than others in a posthuman context of the novel and this is signaled through other characters who consider her archaic because she carried her own pregnancy. Shira's acceptance of Yod as her lover then offers an articulation of how cyborg writing might recode both command and control, and life itself. Nili passes as more human than Yod, although the house computer recognises her as a weapon and Yod as a machine. Nili is extremely enhanced, closer to the militarised cyborg fantasy of super warriors, but comes from a radical feminist enclave rather than Yod's patriarchal descent. However, both characters animate the figure of the cyborg in similar ways, raising questions about human exceptionality and intervention into the ways in which life might be storied.

There are other steps in this choreography of cyborgs however. Haraway notes Piercy's influence on her own work, before Piercy wrote the novel, and before she wrote the manifesto. She notes that there is a cyborg-like figure in the earlier novel *Women on the Edge of Time*. She also takes up Piercy's novel in later work, after the cyborg and thus, these traverses connect through reciprocal relations. In a much later piece of life writing, an interview in which Haraway reflects on her manifestos, she notes of the early 1980s when she was writing the Cyborg Manifesto: 'I came to read and embrace the anarchy-feminism of Marge Piercy. It was a very important period of time for me.' (Haraway and Wolfe; 204). This reflection is of course evidenced in her writing. There are references to Piercy's earlier novel, *Women on the Edge of Time* throughout various essays and in both *Primate Visions*, and in *Simians, Cyborgs and Women*. Piercy in turn reads the cyborg manifesto which she credits in the endnote of *Body of Glass* in 1991 as having influenced the novel. This choreography of cyborg writing enacts Haraway's injunction to destabilise fact and fiction and taken together provides a way of thinking about life story and the fictional *Body of Glass*

in ways that might be more accountable to life. That is to say that *Body of Glass* writes the lives of cyborgs in ways that are in tune with the politics of Haraway's figure, and invoke new reading practices and publics through its address.

The second set of movements around life writing are about anger and attachment. The figure of the cyborg has seen passionate attachments, such as between Haraway and Piercy, but has also shaped passionate detachments. Through its own engagement with both posthumanism and the animal turn, the field of life writing has been more engaged with Haraway's companion species. Other commentators have found it harder to accept animal and other non-human orientations and have expressed incredulity and anger about what they see as the abandonment of the cyborg. However, this misses the way in which the cyborg was prefigured and accompanied by companion species in the 1990s. Tracing through the conversations between Piercy and Haraway above illustrates the ways in which *Primate Visions* and *Simians, Cyborgs and Women* figure cyborgs through primate lives. In *Primate Visions* Haraway names the apes Koko and HAM as cyborgs (1989: 138). She goes on to say: 'there could be no more iconic cyborg than a telemetrically implanted chimpanzee, understudy for 'man' launched from earth in the space program, while his conspecific in the jungle in a 'spontaneous gesture of trust' embraces the hand of a women scientist named Jane in an Gulf Oil ad showing 'man's place in the ecological structure'. (1989: 139)

Even as it walked from the pages of the manifesto the cyborg was a non-human animal relation.

How then to understand the anger and attachments in the writing of Sophie Lewis and to a certain extent Jenny Turner this year, around perceptions of Haraway's animal turn? Both writers reviewed Haraway's latest book in highly invested and negative terms. Sophie Lewis writes in an explicitly autobiographic review of Haraway's *Staying with the Trouble: Making Kin in the Chthulucene*, of one Haraway of the cyborg manifesto who is her hero and whose writing felt like coming home, and another Haraway of *Staying with the Trouble* who makes her weep (Turner). Both Lewis and Turner express high praise for the cyborg manifesto, before producing extremely negative reviews of Haraway's later work.

Sophie Lewis writes in an autobiographical mode, portraying her own relation to Haraway's writing over time. In particular, Lewis expresses very strong attachment to the figure of the cyborg in terms of how she inhabits her own life story. Lewis writes of a visceral encounter with the cyborg manifesto which made of it her:

'Ever since she first hacked my teenaged frontal lobes, I have made sense of myself as cyborg and stalwartly defended what I recognized in my marrow to be the funny, the wild, the profound, the radically illuminating genius of Haraway.' (Lewis, unpaginated).

Lewis then also inhabits the cyborg, and expresses a visceral charge and change in relation to Haraway's writing. This strong attachment, not just affinity but inhabiting the figure and 'coming home' through Haraway contrast with an account of anger and de-attachment twenty years later. Lewis moves from the account of this earlier attachment to one of alienation and anger in which she expresses in a language of grief as she charges Haraway with: 'trafficking irresponsibly in racist narratives' (Lewis, unpaginated).

Jenny Turner's review of both *Manifestly Haraway* and *Staying with the Trouble* takes a biographical approach to writing about Haraway, rather than the autobiography of Lewis's piece. This storying of Haraway's life is used to situate the books, and also to undermine

Haraway, who she refers to as alternately smug, old and scatty. As a reader of Turner's version of writing Haraway's life, it is the misogyny in her repeated allusive shadowing in of a figure of an older woman that might be the most problematic. Turner, like others, refers to the cyborg manifesto as autobiographical, noting of Haraway that, 'She sees her first manifesto as a sort of intellectual autobiography,' (5). Turner then goes on to give a particular account of Haraway's domestic life, academic experience and intellectual trajectory. Turner's main issue seems to be that Haraway's engagement with animals and the reach of nature cultures, is not as convincing as her work on cyborgs. After lauding the cyborg manifesto as an intervention in thinking about human machine relations, Turner states that: 'Eighteen years after that, Haraway tried something similar with the human-animal parameter in *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People and Significant Otherness*.' Turner appears to misrecognize any of Haraway's previous work on non-human animals and produces a reductive, if 'muscular' reading of the Cyborg Manifesto. Turner also then draws on Lewis's strong reaction to *Staying with the Trouble*, for her own critique. There is something of the return of the cyborg in both Turner and Lewis's writing and it is the return of the alienated doppelganger.

In Lewis' account she charges Haraway with having forgotten her own earlier writing, but it is as though Lewis is also writing this out in her repudiation of Haraway's Chthulucene. Lewis, unlike Turner, does not take issue as much with Haraway's non-human animal affinity, so much as with her dealing in compost and soil. However, the central target for Lewis is Haraway's attempt to deal in concerns about population. This triggers Lewis's charge of irresponsible racism. Haraway it seems cannot raise the subject of lives in the collective, at the scale of population. Haraway anticipates anger in response to her attempt to do so, and this is an almost impossible arena. On the one hand narratives of population control are as brutal, colonial, racist and murderous as any of its practices. On the other hand, any project of distributive justice that encompasses a more than human polity cannot avoid this issue entirely. However, Haraway's injunction in this context to 'make kin not babies', can be read in multiple ways. Affinity politics and kin-making was at the heart of the cyborg manifesto. Kin-making also relates to queer politics of family in which heteronormative, reproductive imperatives and co-option into the priorities of biomedical industries might be resisted. To make kin also chimes with another of Haraway's injunctions; to refrain from making killable life.

In *When Species Meet* Haraway develops the caution against making killable life as a line of thought, to try and face up to the responsibility of killing, while trying to do something about it. This is also in tune with Haraway's insistence on non-innocence in her work. Whatever the subject of the Haraway's work, we/it is always of the world and culpable of its conditions not separable from it. In opposition to Lewis's horrified response to Haraway's attempts to think about human death, other readings of *When Species Meet* critique Haraway for not considering the killing of humans. In a collection called *Economies of Death*, Lopez and Gillespie charge Haraway's consideration of the killing of non-human animals as speciesist: 'Thus, there is an inherent speciesism to Haraway's claims about killing. Namely that animals, and especially certain species of animals are more or less sacrificable under capitalist regimes of power. We disagree (...) and reject the hegemonic logic of the heirarchisation of some species lives and deaths over others.' (9). Considering species vulnerability for humans is too far, considering human killing of non-human animals is not far enough.

It is possible to read into these debates an acquisitive desire for Haraway's writing to provide answers and fix everything. However, although her figures have been extra-ordinarily powerful and the cyborg did seem, for many, to make an intervention that was close to an answer; endings or answers are not the point here. Haraway's work is an ongoing life writing project, extended over decades, it writes of lives and life itself and constructs, reworks and spins out numerous figures that have traversed lives, life and writing. The breadth of this menagerie of figures and the different steps of this choreography over time are the point. I have argued that there are more continuities than contradictions across Haraway's work, and her figuring of cyborgs, companions and Chthulu continue to provoke attachment and anger. This capacity for provocation is what is important here and what continues to force thinking about profound elements of identity and life itself.

The revenge of the angry cyborg: from cyborgs to companion species

In terms of life writing, Haraway it turns out does not just 'risk alienating her old Doppelganger the cyborg' but sees it reanimated in a return for vengeance. Lewis invokes the visceral intertextual power of the figure of the cyborg and brings it into a project of attacking Haraway's later writing. Lewis's reanimation then walks off her pages and into Turner's review of Haraway's later books in which these attacks are intensified. Haraway responded to Turner's borrowed animation of Lewis's vengeful cyborg in the *London Review of Books*: 'These are strong charges, and should at least be based on passages in my book rather than on another writer's views.' In responding to Turner's ventriloquism of the alienated doppelganger Haraway draws this form of cyborg writing back into her own life, and opened up a correspondence with Lewis and Turner, expanding further what it means to do life writing.

Feminist media theorist, Caroline Bassett suggested over a decade ago that the cyborg should be buried for a while and dug up later. This prefigures the reanimation of the cyborg as a kind of uncanny, angry and vengeful doppelganger by Lewis, and is at the same time in tune with Haraway's later turn to composting, and compositing. In the recent biographical film about Haraway, *Storytelling For Earthly Survival*, Haraway appears as a doubled figure. In two scenes she speaks to camera whilst another image of her is on screen in the back ground, reading or writing. In another scene she looks at film footage of her younger self explaining *Primate Visions*. Both techniques bring Haraway's vision of multiplicity of a life, and the figure of the doppelganger onscreen.

Haraway gave the cyborg life, animating and inhabiting it in her writing in the 80s and 90s. These iterations and the multiple traversals of the cyborg in other people's writing, cross life writing as an academic field but seem to step beyond it until the field's own rethinking of the posthuman in the early 21st century. Both the ambivalence in life writing scholarship and the expression of anger in Lewis's autobiography speak to the multiple attachments the cyborg has generated, such that it is hard to think without it.

Franklin's reworking, taken together with the cyborg lives collection, demonstrates the ongoing power of figuration. Together these texts speak to the power of life writing and also to techniques of writing life itself. The cyborg embryo emerges as IVF, stem cell research and cloning become dominant biological practices. Current practices of genetically modifying embryos amplify the cyborg embryo through the emergence of hybrid embryos, Mitochondrial transferred embryos and the use of new genetic techniques (such as CRISPR-Cas9) in both research and reproductive embryos, giving life to new cyborg forms. At the

same time a resurgent interest in robots and AI characterize sites of cultural production (film and TV), and discourses of machine learning, neural networks and companion or service robot industries. With increasingly messy edges across the biotechnological spectrum the necessary resurrection of the cyborg manifesto as a powerful blasphemy seems ever more acute.

Haraway's play with and animation of other figures, takes readers through women, cyborgs, simians, companions and Chthulu. Her writing is part of a project of making weaker stories stronger, and stronger stories weaker, and doing so as part of a kin-making network. The cyborg embryo, angry cyborgs, alienated doppelgangers and cyborg zombies are part of this. Following these figures and their traversing paths enables turns beyond computational culture, biotech, and technological fixes. Companions and Chthulu offer routes into and thinking about life as machinic, computational, biological, human and beyond human. The charismatic force of cyborg writing has been generative of much more than thinking of life as cyborgian; it materializes the broader promise of the Cyborg Manifesto and Haraway's menagerie of kinship through thirty years of feminist writing, conversations and thinking about life itself.

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